



STALKE OUT OF SPACE

Kathrine Ærtebjerg, Kristian Devantier, Anne Bennike, Hans Peterson

Groupshow

Stalke Galleri
Vesterbrogade 184
21.10.03 to 19.12.03

Stalke Galleri invited audiences to an exhibition featuring paintings and works on paper by Anne Bennike, Kristian Devantier, Hans Peterson, and Kathrine Ærtebjerg.

It was with great pleasure that Stalke Galleri opened its doors to a group exhibition with Anne Bennike, Kristian Devantier, Hans Peterson, and Kathrine Ærtebjerg. All four artists were invited to present paintings and works on paper together, each working with a form of naïve figuration that encompassed a profound existential approach. The glimmer present in their works suggested serious reflection, and behind the seemingly adventurous expressions lay an underlying sense of anxiety.

Anne Bennike used drawing as a form of escapism, a way of approaching the dream within the waking state. Her drawings were inspired by travel and everyday observations, interwoven with dreamlike scenes. Just as dreams transform the events of the day, her drawings transformed reality through a shared optical lens. The result was a visually stimulating and psychologically charged universe, in which darkness and light existed side by side.

Kristian Devantier worked with colorful paintings that combined cut-out images from advertisements and newspapers. This combination of clean colors and photographic elements gave rise to a surprising and peculiar pictorial world. A distinctive play emerged between color and representation. His faceless figures appeared simple and immediately readable, yet at the same time conveyed sadness and loneliness through their stiff, clumsy forms lacking clear identity. Devantier's work alternated between lighthearted expression and deeper, more serious content, creating a tension between surface and existential reflection.

Hans Peterson painted works characterized by clear colors and figurative representation, with flat backgrounds inhabited by human figures. At first glance, the images appeared normal and recognizable, but upon closer inspection they dissolved into abstract brushstrokes and strained realism. The works shifted from cheerful portraits to more merciless examinations of the transience of the face and the fragility of identity.

Kathrine Ærtebjerg drew inspiration from fairy tales, comics, and children's books. Her works unfolded within a fantastical universe marked by both poetic and unsettling undertones, also reflected in her whimsical titles. Her themes revolved around identity, sexuality, and love, forming a feminine world populated by dolls and dollhouses. What initially appeared as naïve belief gradually transformed into a peculiar landscape inhabited by disturbing creatures, situated somewhere between the fairy tales of childhood and the nightmares of adulthood.



Anne Bennike, Kristian Devantier, Hans Peterson, Kathrine Ærtebjerg.

In a review published in Politiken on 28 November 2003, art critic Peter Michael Hornung wrote about a group exhibition at Stalke Galleri featuring Anne Bennike, Kristian Devantier, Hans Peterson, and Kathrine Ærtebjerg. He noted that while the exhibition initially appeared fragmented—almost like four separate solo presentations—it nonetheless revealed underlying connections between the artists' approaches.

Hornung emphasized shared sensibilities across the works, particularly a fascination with naïve, fantastical imagery and a tension between innocence and unease. He described how motifs of sexuality, vulnerability, and aggression were explored differently across the artists' practices, from Ærtebjerg's dreamlike figuration to Bennike's more confrontational engagement with media culture and contemporary reality television.

The review also highlighted Kristian Devantier's contribution, pointing to his ability to move fluently between drawing and painting and to develop a distinctive figurative language marked by distortion, humor, and expressive freedom. Hornung ultimately singled out Devantier as a particularly strong presence within the exhibition, while framing the overall show as a nuanced presentation of younger artists whose works navigated fantasy, reality, and psychological intensity in varied but interconnected ways.



